



**NATIONAL SURVEY
OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES
FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES**

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from the INSTITUTE FOR CHILDREN, POVERTY, AND HOMELESSNESS

Louisiana had an estimated 764 homeless families on a single night in 2009, with providers serving three times their bed capacity over the course of the year.¹ This brief summarizes some of the state's public and private initiatives to assist these families.

State Taskforce on Homelessness

Taskforce: In July 2009, the governor vetoed legislation that would have renewed the Louisiana Interagency Action Council on Homelessness (previously reauthorized by executive order in March 2004). However, the Department of Children and Family Services informally re-established the council in 2010.

Governor's Appointee: Milton Bailey, President of the Louisiana Housing Finance Agency, has chaired the Louisiana Interagency Action Council on Homelessness since 2010.



Demographic Summary and Overview of Regional Organization

| | Louisiana | Orleans Parish ² | East Baton Rouge Parish ³ |
|---|---|------------------------------|--|
| Persons in homeless families ⁴ | 2,406 | 768 | 312 |
| Number of family shelter beds ⁵ | 2,045 | 561 | 123 |
| Persons in homeless families (per 10,000 population in families) ⁶ | 15 | 101 | 21 |
| Percent of families in poverty ⁷ | 21.58% | 20.93% | 21.31% |
| 10-Year plan date approved or implemented | No plan | No plan | 2004 |
| 10-Year plan target population | No plan | No plan | Chronic |
| Point-in-time count frequency | Biennially | Biennially | Annually |
| Point-in-time count managing agency | Point-in-Time Survey Advisory Committee | UNITY of Greater New Orleans | Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless |
| Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) managing agency | Locally managed | UNITY of Greater New Orleans | Gulf Coast Teaching Family Services |
| Main organizing agency or Continuum of Care (CoC) lead applicant | Louisiana Department of Social Services | UNITY of Greater New Orleans | Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless |

Louisiana's Unsheltered Homeless Families

Between 2007 and 2009, the number of homeless persons in Louisiana on a single night more than doubled (from 5,994 to 12,334). While some regions experienced a decline in the number of homeless persons, the City of New Orleans reported nearly four times as many (8,480, from 1,737). Thirty percent (29.7%, 674) of homeless persons in families in 2009 lacked shelter and resided in places not meant for human habitation, including vehicles and abandoned buildings. Some families with boys older than 12 years of age opt to live in uninhabitable structures to remain intact (as many shelters separate families with adolescent boys). In 2009, the greatest number of unsheltered families and individuals resided the New Orleans region, with an estimated 6,453 homeless persons living in deserted buildings.⁸

Housing Instability in the Wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

In 2009, 69% (8,480) of the state's homeless persons lived in the City of New Orleans.⁹ With over 55,000 abandoned commercial and residential properties,

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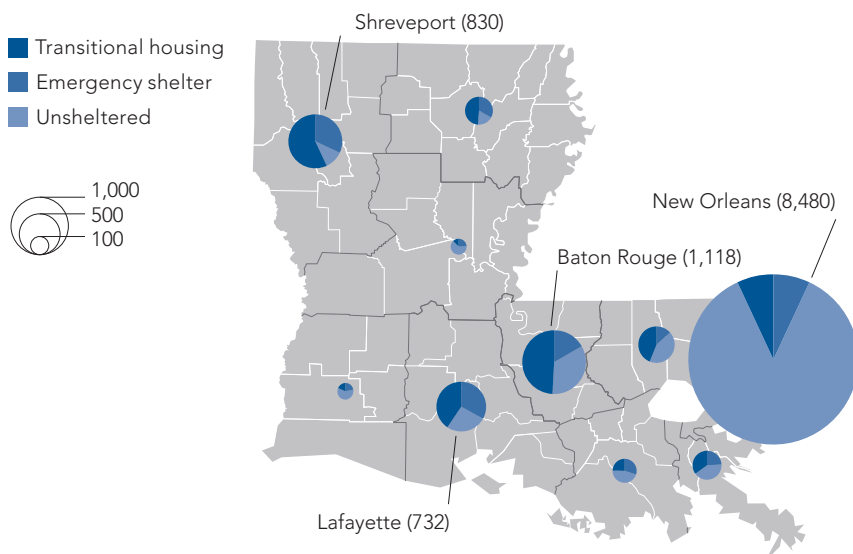
The National Survey of Programs and Services for Homeless Families is an online resource for service providers, advocates, researchers, and public policy makers working in the field of family homelessness. The Web site provides a state-by-state snapshot of the interconnections between governmental and nonprofit work to end family homelessness. For additional information on Louisiana and other states, visit www.icprwb.org

New Orleans is the most blighted city in the nation. In 2005, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita damaged 70% of the city's housing stock, destroying 51,000 rental units and leaving 455,000 persons displaced. The resulting 45% increase in the cost of rent in New Orleans from 2005–10 has left 66% of renters cost-burdened (spending more than 30% of income on housing), making New Orleans the most rent-burdened community in the country. The Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Disaster Voucher Program was created in 2006 to offer rental aid to HUD-assisted families displaced after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. However, vouchers target low-income homeowners and renters, leaving many homeless families unable to access assistance. As of 2010, there were 28,960 families on the waiting list for Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers and over 5,000 families waiting for traditional public housing. New Orleans's shelters consistently operate at capacity, with additional families in hotels.¹⁰

Centralizing Services for Homeless Families in Baton Rouge

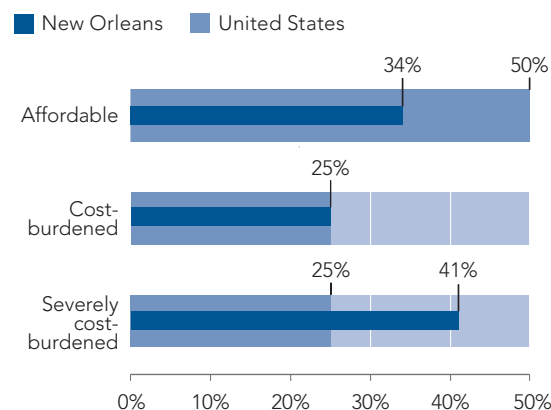
Capital Area Alliance for the Homeless, a non-profit network of social service providers, is partnering with the Society of St. Vincent de Paul of Baton Rouge (a non-profit organization) and the Gulf Coast Housing Partnership (a real estate developer) to create a one-stop, multi-service facility for homeless families and individuals in the Baton Rouge metropolitan area. The One Stop Homeless Services Center and Housing (One Stop), scheduled to open in the summer of 2011, will combine community-based supportive services and residential units (36 single-occupancy rooms) under one roof. One Stop will also include a day center for homeless families and individuals, providing access to basic needs (food, clothing, and toiletries); child care; computers; and mental health, employment, and housing assistance. The facility will streamline a network of at least 15 local agencies that will either relocate to One Stop or offer services in the center a few days a week. The multitude of funding sources for the project includes the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Federal Home Loan Bank, the state Office of Community Development, and Louisiana Housing Finance Authority.¹¹

Number of Homeless Persons (by shelter type and region)



Source: Erin Matheny, "2009 Homeless Needs and Demographics Survey" (presentation, meeting of the Louisiana Interagency Action Council on Homelessness, Baton Rouge, LA, April 21, 2010).

Housing Cost Burden (by percent of renters and national comparison)



Source: UNITY of Greater New Orleans, *Search and Rescue Five Years Later: Saving People Still Trapped in Katrina's Ruins*, August 2010; U.S. Census Bureau, 2008 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates. Affordable housing expenses comprise less than 30% of renters' income. Cost-burdened renters spend 30%–50% of their income on housing expenses. Severely cost-burdened renters spend more than 50% of their income on housing expenses.

Endnotes

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *HUD's 2009 CoC Homeless Assistance Programs—Homeless Populations and Subpopulations*; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *AHAR Exchange Public Reports: 2009 Comprehensive Report of Sheltered Homeless Persons*.
- Statistics for Orleans Parish include Jefferson Parish.
- Statistics for East Baton Rouge Parish include West Feliciana, East Feliciana, Pointe Coupee, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, and Ascension parishes.
- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2009 *Homeless Populations and Subpopulations*.
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- Louisiana Interagency Action Council on Homelessness, *A Single Night Counts: Homelessness in Louisiana, 2007 Point-in-Time Census and Survey Data Report*; Erin Matheny, "2009 Homeless Needs and Demographics Survey" (presentation, meeting of the Louisiana Interagency Action Council on Homelessness, Baton Rouge, LA, April 21, 2010); UNITY of Greater New Orleans, *Search and Rescue Five Years Later: Saving People Still Trapped in Katrina's Ruins*, August 2010; Angela Patterson, et al., "Identifying and Serving Unsheltered Families" (conference presentation, 2011 National Conference on Ending Family Homelessness, Oakland, CA, February 11, 2011).
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- UNITY of Greater New Orleans, *Search and Rescue Five Years Later*, August 2010; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *DVP Operating Requirements (PIH Notice 2006–12)*, 2006.
- Gulf Coast Housing Partnership, *Venture Portfolio December 2010: A Sampling of GCHP Transactions*; Amy Wold, "Project to Provide Centralized Services, Shelter for Homeless," *2theadvocate*, February 7, 2011; Globe Newswire, "Whitney Bank and FHLB Dallas Award \$250K to Gulf Coast Housing Partnership to Support Residential and Community Services Facility for Homeless Residents in Baton Rouge," *Gulf Coast Housing Partnerships*, October 6, 2010.